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Letter dated 6 May 2005 from the Permanent Representative of Ukraine to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

I have the honour to transmit herewith the text of the statement made by the representative of Ukraine at a meeting of the Permanent Council of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe held on 5 May 2005 (see annex).

The statement concerns the administrative punishment of the Ukrainian citizens who participated in a peaceful humanitarian action on the theme "Chornobyl's Road", in Minsk, Belarus, on 26 April 2005.

I would be grateful if the present letter and its annex were distributed as a document of the General Assembly, under item 105 of the agenda of its fifty-ninth session.

(*Signed*) Valeriy **Kuchinsky**
Ambassador
Permanent Representative

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Annex to the letter dated 6 May 2005 from the Permanent Representative of Ukraine to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

Statement
at the meeting of the OSCE Permanent Council
May 5, 2005
As for delivery by *Charge d'Affaires a.i.* Y. Polurez

Thank you Mr. Chairman,

With deep concern we heard the news about detention, on 26 April this year, and administrative punishment of five Ukrainian citizens, who participated in a peaceful, humanitarian action "Chornobyl's Road" the same day in Minsk in Belarus. The detention was carried out with the use of brutal force.

We condemn violations of the rights of the Ukrainian citizens, committed by the law enforcement agencies of the Republic of Belarus, as well as during the court hearings of respective cases.

Lack of opportunity for the detained to meet with the Ukrainian Consul at the initial stage of the case infringed their right to legal assistance. Moreover, the court has neglected this circumstance and restricted lawyer's opportunities to defend the citizens of Ukraine during the hearings in the court.

Actions of the Belorussian side contradict provisions of Vienna Convention on Diplomatic Relations, as well as inalienable right of every citizen to a meeting with the consular official of his/her state. Unfortunately, Belorussian authorities refused to release Ukrainian citizens despite repeated requests of the Ukrainian side and the state of health of the detainees, is considered in Ukraine as an unfriendly gesture towards Ukraine.

We are also distressed that different punishment measures were administered to the Ukrainian detainees compared to Russian citizens, who were detained together with them and then released. This circumstance is considered as partiality of the Belorussian judicial bodies and discrimination against the Ukrainian citizens.

Mr. Chairman,

We note with regret that this year's commemoration of the Chornobyl tragedy common to our nations was marred in Belarus by the actions that demonstrated again the existence of problems in the field of human rights in this country.

We call upon Belorussian authorities to take necessary and timely steps in order to resolve the above-said situation.

Thank you Mr. Chairman.